

# VISUAL ART GLOSSARY

**Abstract** - art that looks as if it contains no recognizable form

**Asymmetrical** - not being the same on both sides

**Background** - those things that seem the most distant, as if in the back of the picture

**Canvas** - a tightly stretched cloth surface on which to paint

**Center of interest** - the main idea or object in a work of art

**Ceramics** - objects made of fired clay or porcelain

## Color theory

**primary colors** - red, yellow, and blue

**secondary colors** - mixtures of two primary colors

red and yellow make orange

red and blue make violet

yellow and blue make green

**intermediate colors** - one primary and one secondary color mixed together

**neutral colors** - black, white, gray

**warm colors** - colors that make you feel warm - red, yellow, orange

**cool colors** - colors that make you feel cool - blue, green, violet

**hue** - colors found on a color wheel

**intensity** - quality of brightness

**value** - the degree of lightness or darkness of a color

**shades** - colors that have been darkened with black

**tints** - colors that have been lightened with white

**monochromatic** - color combinations that are shades and tints of one color

**complementary** - colors that are opposite one another on the color wheel

red/green, orange/blue, yellow/violet

**analogous** - colors found side by side on color wheel

**Composition** - an arrangement of the elements and principles of art in a work

**Depth** - showing distance in a picture

**Design** - a visual composition or plan before the actual art work has begun

## Dimensional

two - a work of **art** that has height and width

three - a work of art that has height, width, and depth

## Elements of art

**color** - the result of the reflection or absorption of light by a surface

**line** - a mark made by a moving point (straight, curved, zigzag, broken, etc.)

**shape** - a two dimensional element. Both geometric shapes (circles, triangles, squares, etc.) and free form or organic shapes (puddles, clouds, fire, etc.) are used.

**form** - a three dimensional element

**texture** - the way an object feels or looks as if it feels

**value** - the degree of lightness or darkness

**space** - the open parts between, inside, and around shapes.

**positive space** refers to areas that are filled in

**negative space** refers to areas that are not filled in

**Emphasis** - the part of the art work that is noticed first

**Expression** - communicating an idea or feeling through a work of art

**Focal point** - main idea in a work of art, center of interest

**Forms of art**

**still life** - a work of art made up of inanimate objects

**landscape** - a picture or painting of scenery

**portrait** - a painting of a person or group of persons

**collage** - a composition in which materials are pasted on a surface

**applied design** - cut and pasted to a surface

**computer art** - art produced with the use of a computer

**Image** - a likeness or reproduction of an object

**Middle ground** - objects placed in the center of the picture

**Mobile** - a sculpture with freely moving parts

**Mural** - large drawing or painting applied directly to a wall

**Opaque** - materials which you cannot see through

**Perspective** - technique for indicating depth; it involves a system of lines that converge at vanishing points, those places in the distance at which objects seem to disappear.

**Principles of design**

**Balance** - the way objects in a work of art are placed to create a sense of equilibrium. In symmetrical balance objects are the same on both sides of the art work. In asymmetrical balance, the opposite sides are different.

**Contrast** - the juxtaposition of two different things (colors, textures, etc.)

**Emphasis** - The point to which the artist wants to draw the viewers attention

**Pattern** - visual repetition of any element at regular intervals. Patterns create no feeling of movement.

**Rhythm** - The feeling of movement created by the repetition of such elements as lines, shapes, colors at irregular intervals

**Scale** - the relationship between the size of an image in a work of art and the real-life object.

**Unity** - Seeing everything in your work as a whole picture

**Variety** - Diversity of the elements used (thickness of lines, intensities of colors, size of shapes, etc.)

**Symmetrical** - being exactly the same on both sides

**Technique** - the process used to create a work of art (painting, photography, casting, weaving)

**Translucent** - allowing light to shine through

**Transparent** - able to be seen through